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Alberta Finance
Economic Bulletin

Economic Statistics Released During the Week of October 18, 2004 to October 22, 2004

	Reference Period	Month/Previous Month (m/m)	Month/Previous Year's Month (y/y)	Comments
Wholesale Trade ($ Millions)	August			Canadian wholesale trade expanded for the sixth consecutive month in August, rising 0.7%. Trade groups recording large monthly increases included metal products (+6.5%), computers and other electronic equipment (+3.8%), farm products (+3.2%) and the 'other products' category (+3.1%). These gains were attributable in part to a surge in machinery and electronic equipment sales. Alberta's wholesale trade rose 3.6% in August. On a year-to-date basis, sales in Alberta were up 11.8% compared with the same period in 2003.
Alberta	3,960	3.6%	17.1%	
Canada	38,345	0.7%	15.8%	
Retail sales ($ Millions)	August			In August, Canadian retail sales increased 0.8% from July, to a record $29.1 billion, the seventh monthly increase in the first eight months of 2004. The largest gains were reported in building and outdoor home supplies (+3.9%) and pharmacies and personal care (+1.8%). Declines in clothing and accessories (-1.5%) and general merchandise (-1.3%) sales were attributable to weak demand for clothing. On an annual basis, Alberta (+10.3%), Manitoba (+7.5%) and British Columbia (+6.4%) lead the provinces in retail sales, well above the national average of 4.2%.
Alberta	3,636	-0.6%	7.6%	
Canada	29,085	0.8%	3.4%	
Canadian Composite Leading Index (1992=100)	September			In September, the growth of the Canadian Composite leading index slowed to 0.3%, following gains of 1.0% in June, 0.7% in July and 0.5% in August. The slowdown in the index reflects a deceleration of the US leading indicator and a levelling off of housing after extraordinary gains in the spring. Overall, 6 of the 10 components rose in September. The US leading indicator (0.0%) stalled for the first time in 16 months, while all components related to household demand retreated. The housing index posted a second consecutive monthly drop (-0.8%). However, continued strength in capital spending drove an eleventh straight increase in new orders (+0.7%).
	199.9	0.3%	8.4%	